

# Strategy for Fielding

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The purpose of this document is to discuss strategy for fielding. Fielding strategy is all about position. Position yourself to move. Position yourself to throw, and probably most important position yourself to hurt.

### Position yourself to hurt

I am a 60+ year old catcher, so I have been watching fielders for many years. The first thing I think of when I think of fielding is getting in front of the ball with your eyes down there where you can see what the ball is doing. If you put yourself in position to hurt unless you catch it, then you will catch it. You will catch it with unconscious movements faster than you can think. You will also have time to catch things that miss you. But if you are not in front of the ball so it will hurt, then when you get any kind of bad hop subconsciously you will protect yourself. Your first move will be to protect yourself, so you will be slow to catch things that miss you.

### Position yourself to throw

Fielders need to get in front of the ball. Don't reach for the ball. Even when you are charging from the outfield for a ground ball, get in front of the ball. Twist your body sideways so you can easily adjust your glove before you catch the ball, but keep your body in front of the ball. As a catcher, I see the problem most often with infielders. Positioning yourself to throw as an infielder means coming up on the ball. The good infielders wait until the last second to come up, catch and throw. They are under and in front of the ball so if they do not catch it will hurt. As a catcher, we are taught to just get in front of the ball and let it hit us without trying to catch it. Doing this we see how easy it is to wait till the last second.

### Position yourself to move

Should you be positioned to move sideways or fore and aft? For sure you should be in an athletic position to move. That position is with your weight on the balls of the feet and our but down. In this position your heels are hardly off the ground. The more the weight is on the inside of the feet, the easier it is to move sideways and vice versa. At third and first you do not have much time to move sideways, and you have to quickly move fore and aft. So, most first and third baseman stand a little bow legged on the outside of their feet. Most shortstops and second basemen are on the insides of their feet. Outfielders just stand there. They do not have to stand in an athletic position because they begin to move a little left or right as soon as they see the swing, but they have to be careful on balls hit right at them. Many times the best outfielder is not the fastest player, but the one with the best eyes and anticipation.

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